

Capturing the Value of Customer Communications

Major telecom provider cuts costs and boosts customer engagement with eBill service.

OVERVIEW

A leading provider of fixed-line broadband, voice telephony, television, and mobile services to consumers and businesses in the United Kingdom had a customer communications challenge. The company historically had managed its customer billing processes through an outsourced printing and fulfillment partner that handled production and delivery of paper-based billing statements. However, as the company and its customers moved towards digital communications channels, this arrangement became increasingly inefficient and an obstacle to customer responsiveness. Paper statements were expensive to produce and deliver, and didn't provide the kind of auditability and delivery verification the business required to ensure its customers were receiving proper billing notification.

In discussion with HP Exstream, the premier customer communications management (CCM) platform, company executives determined that bringing statement production and digital delivery in-house would drive business efficiency through consolidated and streamlined operations, including eliminating the considerable recurring costs of consuming third-party production services. Moreover, unifying digital communications in-house would provide greater convenience and responsiveness to customers. The company's team knew that electronic delivery of billing statements required a high-performing, secure, and instrumented transactional messaging infrastructure.

REQUIREMENTS

The message delivery infrastructure the company sought to deploy needed to meet a range of functional requirements:

- Seamless integration with the HP Exstream CCM platform, including ability to accept and process fully-formed message content and recipient records, was essential to the project's objectives.
- Message disposition logging and delivery failure reporting were critical to track whether customers were in fact receiving their statements.
- The system needed to provide for intelligent management of message stream to allow for optimum traffic shaping and load management, and so that its customer call center would not be overwhelmed by peak demand.

THE SPARKPOST SOLUTION—EBILLS IN ACTION

After conducting an RFP review process with several vendors, the company chose to work with HP Exstream and SparkPost to implement its new eBill notification services. SparkPost's solution was the ideal message delivery infrastructure for the situation for a variety of reasons.

- SparkPost's API-driven architecture and flexible integration options allowed for seamless connection of HP Exstream's message-generation capabilities to the delivery infrastructure.

- The deep messaging capabilities of SparkPost's infrastructure also provide enormous flexibility in sending choices, with policy-driven traffic shaping, throttling, and batch delivery. This flexibility enables the company to control the flow of its eBill notifications to ensure a measured delivery rate that keeps a steady balance of incoming calls to its customer service center.
- SparkPost's instrumentation and reporting of message disposition data (whether a message was received, opened, bounced, blocked as spam, etc.) enable end-to-end message tracking, delivery confirmation, and flagging problematic messages for exception handling.

The company generates eBill message content in its HP Exstream CCM system, and then seamlessly routes those messages through SparkPost's platform for delivery. The messages are simple notices letting the customer know their "bill is ready," along with high-level summary data, a login link to a more detailed online statement, and marketing content designed to drive ongoing customer engagement. The online statement provides payment options and further account details, and makes it easier than ever for customers to control their choices for broadband, TV, voice, and mobile services.

The joint solution has enabled the company to eliminate the cost of producing and delivering paper statements, while providing customers with greatly improved online service. Key bottom-line benefits include:

- Bringing billing production and delivery services in-house will save the company in the range of \$2 – \$3 million per year on external service costs and help drive down the cost of paper statements as customers move to digital.
- With clear visibility into email processes via the solution, the company has better control than ever over its billing operations, and can pinpoint and remedy problems that might negatively affect customer service faster than ever before.

ABOUT SPARKPOST

SparkPost is the cloud solution from the world's number one email infrastructure provider, whose customers—including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Groupon, Salesforce, Marketo, Pinterest, Zillow and Comcast—send over 3 trillion messages a year, over 25% of the world's legitimate email. Our service outperforms every other cloud or on-premises alternative, and these companies choose us to provide the deliverability, speed and insight they need to drive customer engagement for their business.

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